

Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (USDA)

EPA Region 3

Maryland
Prince George's
County
Beltsville

EPA ID# MD0120508940 **Last Update:** June
2002

5th Congressional District **Other Names:** None

Current Site Status

The Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) in Beltsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland is currently undergoing site screening at 59 areas to determine whether they warrant remediation under Superfund's cleanup process.

Site Description

BARC in Beltsville, Prince Georges County, Maryland covers 6,500 acres. The facility is owned and operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Research at BARC addresses soil, water and air conservation, human nutrition, and integration of agricultural systems as well as plant and animal science. In addition to large agricultural plots, wooded areas and wetlands, there are more than 800 buildings on the premises including research laboratories,

administrative offices, shops, greenhouses, barns, and several houses.

Site Responsibility

The site is being addressed through Federal and State actions by the USDA.

NPL Listing History

Proposed Date: 05/10/93

Final Date: 05/31/94

Threats and Contaminants

USDA's initial investigations in 1990, 1991, and 1992 revealed elevated levels of PAHs, several pesticides, PCBs, and a variety of heavy metals in soil, surface water, and sediments. Contaminated surface water threatens several creeks and streams such as the Paint Branch, Little Paint Branch, Beaver Dam Creek, and Indian Creek that receive drainage from the site. These waterways all flow into the Anacostia River, which, in turn, flows into the Potomac River. Contaminants in the groundwater and surface water also threaten nearby wetlands adjacent to Beaver Dam Creek. Fisheries in the Northeast Branch as well as the Anacostia River provide a habitat for the Bald Eagle, an endangered species, and the Swamp Pink flower, which is a threatened species.

Cleanup Progress

The EPA and USDA have entered into a Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) that establishes the procedural framework and schedule for developing, implementing, and monitoring appropriate response actions at the site. To date, a comprehensive review of aerial photography, a field reconnaissance, and a desktop data collection report have been completed in an effort to identify potential sources of contamination located on the site. Of the 166 initial Areas of Concern (AOCs) only 59 AOCs were recommended for further investigation. These 59 sites will undergo a site screening process to determine whether they warrant remediation under Superfund's RI/FS process.

In addition to the ongoing screening process, significant cleanup

work has been completed at the Biodegradable Landfill. In 1993 BARC removed approximately 67,000 cubic yards of debris and surrounding soil from the landfill to expedite transfer of land from BARC to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). Although the source of contamination is believed to be removed, groundwater associated with the site is suspected to be contaminated. A Remedial Investigation (RI) is scheduled for this site which will assist in determining the extent of contamination and the necessity of further remedial action.

Contacts

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The detailed Administrative Record can be examined at the following location:

Beltsville Agricultural Research Center

Information Repository

10300 Baltimore Ave

Building 003, Room 014

Beltsville, MD 20705